

### ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A method of producing a silica gel by hydrolyzing a silicon alkoxide and  
subjecting the resulting hydrogel to a hydrothermal treatment substantially without  
aging it is described. Also described is a silica gel produced by such a method and a

5 silica gel which has the following characteristics:

(a) the pore volume is from 0.6 to 1.6 ml/g,

(b) the specific surface area is from 300 to 900 m<sup>2</sup>/g,

(c) the mode diameter (D<sub>max</sub>) of pores is less than 20 nm,

(d) the volume of pores having diameters within  $\pm 20\%$  of D<sub>max</sub> is at least

10 50% of the total pore volume,

(e) it is amorphous, and

(f) the content of metal impurities is at most 500 ppm.